



ORGANIZATIONAL CLIMATE AND EDUCATIONAL OUTCOMES IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

* Maricela Guzmán Cáceres¹ | Augusto Renato Pérez Mayo² |
José Alberto Hernández Aguilar²

¹ Postdoctoral researcher. Interdisciplinary Research Center in the Sciences and Humanities, National Autonomous University of Mexico, Mexico City, Mexico - 04510. *Corresponding Author

² Researcher professor. Faculty of Accounting, Management and Informatics, Autonomous University of the State of Morelos, Cuernavaca, Mexico - 62209.

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this research is to know the relationship between the organizational climate of schools and the levels of educational achievement reached by students of the basic level of the state of Tabasco, Mexico. The sample was composed of 33 primary schools, which were selected according to the level of accomplishment in the test ENLACE (Evaluación Nacional del Logro Académico en Centros Escolares - National Assessment of Academic Achievement in Schools). It was applied to a sample of teachers from each school, the Questionnaire of Organizational Climate designed by Alavi and Jahandari, adapted to the context of the investigation. To analyze the data we used the statistical test ANOVA. The results indicate that there is a statistically significant relation between the organizational climate of schools and educational outcomes obtained by the students, regardless of the status of marginalization or educational modality that is the inquiry. Thus, the schools that have a good organizational climate get higher educational results than those that have a poor organizational climate.

KEYWORDS: Organizational Climate, school environment, educational outcomes, primary education, school administration.

Introduction

The assessment of learning has been a constant in most of the countries of the world in recent years. It has included all levels and educational actors and as a result, has managed to obtain indicators on the situation that prevails in the schools and in the classroom, as well as the conditions that lead to educational attainment or on the contrary to the low school performance. All this has made it possible to determine the impact of the different variables involved in the educational performance of students

Since the decade of the nineties of last century, Vélez, Schiefelbein and Valenzuela (1994) pointed out that the quality of education in the primary and secondary levels in Latin American countries, as measured by tests of cognitive achievement, showed low in both absolute and relative terms, with regard to more developed countries and that the comparative studies located in the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean below the majority of other regions of the world.

The situation has not changed much in the last twenty years, although as indicated by the TERCE report (Third Regional Comparative and Explanatory Study) developed by UNESCO, since 2000, Latin America has had a significant economic growth that came entail a strengthening of educational and social policies that produced major changes, including "the incorporation of the schools of most vulnerable populations, the dramatic drop in the percentage of the population living in conditions of poverty, the provision of support to the most needy families and the provision of textbooks and educational materials of different nature" (UNESCO, 2015, p. 2). However, despite the benefits of these policies with regard to increasing the coverage, reducing the dropout and repetition, Latin America continues to be the region of the world with the highest levels of educational inequality.

Today, organizational efficiency has become a key factor for improving the academic quality and the educational performance of students in Latin American societies characterized by a high degree of marginalization, in which the crisis of learning, especially affect the most vulnerable. The TERCE study, found that school environment and good teaching practices are factors that are linked positively with the learning achievements, as well as others such as the socioeconomic level of the families, the support of the parents, the promotion of reading, the prior assistance to pre-school education and the avail-

ability of booklets and books. In particular, the results of the study show that "the work environment was significantly related to academic achievement in 10% of the countries, disciplines and degrees evaluated" (UNESCO, 2015, p. 11).

The component of the organizational climate is an element that impacts the daily life in educational organizations and is essential for its successful operation and the achievement of good educational outcomes. In this regard, Rodríguez (2005) notes that the relationship between human beings generates psychosocial processes - both individual and group - that contribute to modify the organizational evolution and even more constitute part of it. Each member of the organization constitutes itself a key factor of organizational change, hence the importance of the diagnosis as a way of locating what adds and subtracts in promoting the development of this education system toward the achievement of the objectives that have been formulated for it.

Following Brik and Driscoll (cited by Fernández 2004), the various organizational climates within an educational institution may be due to their degree of socio-cultural integration. In such a way that according to the structure of empirical dimensions, schools are located in two ends, on the one hand schools with a climate of high integration, called schools community and on the other, the schools that have a low level of social integration that could be called anomic school, characterized by a null or reduced consensus in an image goal of the school, high insulation between teachers, low motivation and lack of commitment to the pupils at socio-academic risk.

According to Cuadra and Veloso (2010), leadership plays the most relevant role in the organizational climate, due to the style of leadership that exhibit the heads (directors), will impact on the climate and it, in turn, it shall do so on the creativity and productivity. In addition, transformational leaders communicate a vision to their subordinates and increase the commitment of these with the vision, through the quality of the interpersonal relations. The openness and closeness would be a result of these and has a substantial effect on the climate perceived.

Materials and Methods:

For this research was used as a sampling frame the list of the primary schools located in the state of Tabasco who participated in the

National Assessment of Academic Achievement in Schools (ENLACE) applied in Mexico since 2006 and measures the skills of students in the areas of Spanish, mathematics and civics. The sample of schools was grouped in clusters, according to the classification of modalities that establishes ENLACE to the primary level: a) Individuals, b) General, c) Indigenous and d) CONAFE (Secretaría de Educación Pública, 2015).

A non-probabilistic sample was used, in which schools and teachers who participate in the study were selected. The selection of participants was made by quotas (schools and teachers). In the case of schools, taking into account the statistical dimension of each mode, 5 private schools, 15 general schools (located in urban, suburban and rural areas), 6 indigenous schools and 5 schools CONAFE (high poverty) were selected. In total organizational climate questionnaire was applied to 130 teachers from 32 primary schools.

To measure the organizational climate of primary schools of Tabasco, was used the Questionnaire of Organizational Climate applied by Alavi and Jahandari (2005) in the study: "The Organizational Climate of Kerman Shahid Bahonar University", which was adapted to the educational context of the investigation. The questionnaire was applied in the school breaks to a representative sample of teachers from schools that formed the sample. The structure of the instrument was Likert Scale type: 9 questions that provided identification data such as sex, age, years of service, location of the school, employment status and level of studies and 24 substantive statements that were grouped in the following dimensions: Cooperation in the task, Control, motivation, group affiliation and style of leadership. The response options were always, very often, sometimes, few times and never.

To analyze the results of the Organizational Climate ANOVA test was used. It was established as a factor the level obtained by schools in the ENLACE test and as dependent variables, the required for each dimension. To establish that there are significative differences the value "sig." obtained by SPSS must be lower than 0.05

Results and Discussion

The profile of the 130 teachers who answered the questionnaire of organizational climate is the following: 62% belong to schools of general pattern, 19% are indigenous, 15 % of private schools and 4 % of Conafe. The 62 % are women and 38% men. In terms of age, 35 % are 30 to 39 years, 32% are 40 to 49 years, 18% are 20 to 29 years and 15% are 50 to 59 years. With regard to the years of service: 48% have more than 15 years, 25% have from 0 to 5, 19 % of 11 to 15 and 8 % of 6 to 10. The employment status of the teachers is the following: 72% are working permanently, 27% have eventual contracts and 1 % has another condition. In reference to the level of studies of the teachers, 61% have a degree, 19% normal school, 8% specialty, 8% master and 4 % other. About the geographical location of the 32 schools that constitute the sample, 65% are located in rural areas and 35 % in urban areas.

After the run of the ANOVA analysis in the database resulting from the application of the questionnaires of organizational climate, the results were grouped in the following dimensions:

Cooperation in the task

The dimension of cooperation in the task involves the willingness and the commitment that have teachers to carry out the characteristic activities of their work, as well as those that are requested by the leader of the institution, harmoniously and working together. In this respect it was found that there were no significant differences between the schools located in high, medium and low levels, in regard to that teachers consider that in their schools send them to do more activities for which they are entitled, nor with regard to the staff protest when they have to work overtime. In general, most of the teachers felt that staff working in the institution is creative and innovative. In this dimension a significant difference was found in terms of the appreciation that have teachers with regard to the degree to which their coworkers, it means, other teachers, directors, administrative and cleaning staff, collaborate together in the activities of the school. Here we find that it is in the schools of high level, where the majority of the teachers feel that "the school staff is collaborative". See table 1. These scores suggest that there are differences in the degree of cooperation that is between the academic staff of the institution, depending on the level that schools have reached in ENLACE and that in schools where the students obtained better academic performance was where

teachers are manifested more cooperative in the various tasks carried out on a daily basis in the institution.

TABLE 1. MEAN DIFFERENCE DIMENSION "COOPERATION IN THE TASK"

Items		Level in ENLACE			
		High	Medium	Low	Sig
The school staff is in school collaborative	N	38	20	7	
	Mean	4.74	4.20	4.00	0.017*
They send you to do more activities that correspond to you	N	38	21	7	
	Mean	2.76	2.90	2.29	0.527
The staff that works here is creative and innovative	N	38	21	7	
	Mean	4.39	4.00	4.14	0.246
The staff did not protest when to have to work extra hours	N	39	20	7	
		2.46	3.15	3.14	0.154

* The mean difference is significant at 95%

Control

The Control dimension includes all those activities carried out by the central administration, that is to say, by the director of the school, involving the monitoring and supervision, as well as the style in which it is carried out. The control is one of the functions of management, such as the planning, organization, staffing, and direction. Is a very important function because it helps to correct the mistakes and take corrective action to minimize failures so that they can achieve the objectives of the organization in the desired manner

In the control dimension, we find that in schools of high level and low level, there is a greater control of assistance and work of staff, which is in the schools of high level where it is more frequent that the principal regularly visits the classroom to monitor the performance of teachers, and is also in these schools where the principals have a higher level of control or obedience with regard to the guidelines, provisions and orders addressed to teachers

However, in two of the items corresponding to the dimension of control, the results pointed to differences significantly higher among educational levels. This was compared to that "the director does not allow the staff to decide on the procedures of work", where the authoritarianism prevails in the directors of the schools of medium level. The second item where there were significant differences and that is closely related to the previous one was: "The regulations imposed by the director are unquestionable". Here we find a great difference between what think the teachers in schools with high educational outcomes, with respect to their partners of schools of medium and low level: in schools of high level teachers and professors have the possibility of questioning, suggesting, commenting, with regard to the standards of the institution, while in schools with lower levels of academic achievement, this possibility is much less, giving way to more despotic conditions between directors and teachers. See table 2.

TABLE 2. MEAN DIFFERENCE DIMENSION "CONTROL"

Items		Level in ENLACE			
		High	Medium	Low	Sig
The director controls the assistance and the work of the staff	N	39	21	7	
	Mean	4.44	4.00	4.57	0.163
The Director regularly visit the classroom to monitor the performance of teachers	N	39	21	7	
	Mean	3.92	3.57	3.29	0.267
The director does not allow the staff to decide on the Working Procedures	N	38	20	7	
	Mean	1.76	2.45	1.57	0.024*
The regulations imposed by the director are unquestionable	N	38	21	7	
	Mean	2.08	3.00	3.00	0.009*

Staff obey the orders of the Director	N	37	21	7	
	Mean	4.62	4.24	4.14	0.103
The director consults the staff on the working procedures	N	39	21	7	
	Mean	4.33	3.95	3.86	0.267

*The mean difference is significant at 95%

Motivation

The motivation is the psychological force that drives people to initiate, maintain and improve their job tasks. It cannot be expected that a person is motivated to contribute to organizational objectives if you do not find in the organization, a way to meet their personal needs, be they economic, social or personal development. Various investigations have linked the level of motivation of workers with their work performance and personal satisfaction, concluding that a motivated worker is more effective and responsible

It is in the dimension of motivation, where the three items that were measured, showed significant differences in the three levels of academic achievement: high, medium and low. In the statement, "the staff like their work and are proud to belong to the primary", the score derived from the opinion of teachers in schools with high levels of achievement had an average of 4.85, while in schools with low levels of academic achievement, the score for this same statement was of 3.71 (see table 3). This is indicating that there is a direct relationship between the satisfaction with the work done, as well as belonging to an educational organization and the results of the students in the evaluations of academic achievement.

Very related to the foregoing, the item "The staff speak constantly of leaving his job", deals with the same subject of job satisfaction, but in a reverse direction, it means, a person that day to day dreams with changing place of work, is indicating that he or she did not feel motivated or satisfied with the current job. In this regard, was in schools with low levels of academic achievement, where can be found more teachers who thought constantly to abandon their work (see table 3).

Finally, the third item of the dimension motivation addresses the leadership style of directors regarding how to establish communication with their teachers, either through the motivation and words of encouragement, or through scolding and reprimands that are not conducive to success at work, nor create a good working climate. In this item, there was again significant differences that realize that schools with low academic performance often have to a greater extent, directors guided by an autocratic leadership style, who shout, send, threaten, instead of feeding back positively to his work team (see table 3).

TABLE 3. MEAN DIFFERENCE DIMENSION "MOTIVATION"

Items		Level in ENLACE			
		High	Medium	Low	Sig
The staff like their work and are proud to belong to the Primary	N	39	20	7	
	Mean	4.85	4.50	3.71	0.001*
Staff speak constantly quit their job	N	39	21	7	
	Mean	1.56	2.14	2.29	0.033*
The director uses more the scolding that motivation and words of encouragement	N	39	21	7	
	Mean	1.62	2.19	2.00	0.034*

*The mean difference is significant at 95%

Group affiliation

The groups can be satisfactions of social needs; people can enjoy the fact of belonging to a group by the interaction that occurs between the members. For many people, the interactions that occur at work are the main source of satisfaction in regard to their needs for affiliation. The group affiliation, understood as the satisfaction that feel workers to share with their colleagues and to establish relations of friendship that even go so far as to make them feel as part of a family, was the dimension in which, according to the ANOVA test, there were no scores in those submitted statistically significant differences. How-

ever, it is noted that the 5 items that make up this dimension, were schools with high levels of educational attainment, which maintain relationships of greater friendship between colleagues, believe that the morale of their colleagues is faultless, that many of their most intimate friends are colleagues and that at her school there is a prevailing climate of respect among the staff (see table 4).

TABLE NO. 4. MEAN DIFFERENCE DIMENSION "GROUP AFFILIATION"

Items		Level in ENLACE			
		High	Medium	Low	Sig
The relationship between the staff is little friendly	N	38	21	7	
	Mean	2.11	2.71	3.14	0.060
The staff of the primary account with a morality spotless	N	39	20	7	
	Mean	4.51	4.35	4.00	0.345
The closest of friends of staff are their colleagues	N	38	19	6	
	Mean	3.16	2.79	2.17	0.150
The staff members are respected among them	N	39	21	7	
	Mean	4.82	4.57	4.29	0.133

* The mean difference is significant at 95%

Leadership

The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development OECD, has pointed out that the school leadership is a priority in the world educational policy, due to that to the extent that they have been studied education and educational outcomes, has become essential to reconsider the role of school leaders, who play a fundamental role in achieving organizational climates favorable to the development of good educational outcomes.

A good leadership should improve the ability of workers to realize their aspirations, so that they can carry out their work with satisfaction and have the capacity to deal with the specific problems of the Organization, in such a way that the work is not only an instrument for economic gain but an activity with intrinsic value that permits the development and personal and professional growth of each person. Leadership requires social skills and techniques that will lead to the subordinates to the achievement of goals. That is why the leaders require to develop social skills such as empathy, active listening, achieve confidence and motivation in their community

With regard to the dimension of leadership, it is noted that in 5 of the 7 items that make it up, are schools of high levels where in a greater extent, principals are aware of the needs of the staff, they were concerned about the welfare of the school, kindly communicated to staff their mistakes and errors, allow staff to express their points of view and considered the director as a friend, but not as superior (see table 5).

There were, however, 2 items of the Leadership dimension, in which differences were statistically significant. These are: "The director does not care about the opinion of the staff" and "The director tries to keep its social distance with the staff". In the first case, the teachers from schools of high level were against the claim, understanding that their directors care and take into account the opinion of the community of teachers. On the other hand, consider that their directors do not establish marked social gaps between them and the teachers, which favors cooperation, group affiliation and motivation in the school community.

TABLE NO. 5. MEAN DIFFERENCE DIMENSION "LEADERSHIP"

Items		Level in ENLACE			
		High	Medium	Low	Sig
The director is pending the needs of staff	N	39	21	7	
	Mean	4.36	3.95	3.86	0.228
The director is concerned about the welfare of the staff of the school	N	39	21	7	
	Mean	4.18	3.90	4.00	0.651

To the director does not care about the opinion of the staff	N	39	21	6	
	Mean	2.62	2.52	1.17	0.036*
The director tries to keep its social distance with the staff	N	39	21	7	
	Mean	1.67	2.57	2.71	0.003*
The Director communicates kindly to staff their errors and faults	N	39	21	7	
	Mean	3.92	3.57	3.29	0.267
The director gives staff a chance to express their points of view	N	38	21	7	
	Mean	4.53	4.29	4.14	0.342
The staff consider the director as a friend but not as superior	N	39	21	7	
	Mean	3.51	3.33	2.57	0.311

*The mean difference is significant at 95%

Conclusions:

The results of the investigation clearly point to the fact that there is a significant relationship between the level of educational attainment reached by the primary level students studied and the organizational climate that prevails in their schools. This tells us that the socio-cultural elements present in educational organizations are an important factor to promote better learning conditions for the students. When teachers are motivated to work, respecting their views, the directors of the schools are concerned about their working conditions and the communication and treatment toward their teamwork is cordial and friendly, we then talk about a labor climate fertile for cognitive development and human both teachers and students. It is recommended to carry out investigations in other contexts and educational levels to assess the effects of organizational climate in obtaining good

educational outcomes.

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